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The Essentials of World Organization

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I SHALL endeavor to treat this subject first as an original proposition of what kind of a world organization I regard as essential, if we were perfectly at liberty to advocate that kind of an organization, irrespective of organizations that now exist. I take it for granted, too, that the word "effective organization" does not mean completely effective, for I am frank to say that under existing conditions I do not believe that any organization, however formed, can be completely effective in the preservation of peace. There can be no effective world organization to preserve peace until the leading nations of the world shall be willing to apply principles of justice and equity to all world questions. The nations must all be as unselfish in their aims and purposes as was the United States in the great war in which we have been engaged. So long as any powerful nation or group of nations shall seek to exploit weaker peoples for their own advantage, so long as they shall desire to add to their territory by conquest, just so long can there be no completely effective world organization for peace.

Therefore, the first essential of such an organization is a recognition that might without right shall no longer rule anywhere. It is too much to hope for that any of us shall live to see this happy day, but there are some things that can be done through world organization to prevent war. The wars that come through misunderstanding, through pride, through hot-headedness or the arrogance of those having power to declare war, can nearly always be prevented through a world organiza-

tion, and sometimes such organization may also prevent wars of conquest.

The essentials of such an organization I submit are three: (1) The creation of an international court of justice; (2) the codification of international law; and (3) a league or an association of nations for the purpose of conference and counsel only.

Taking up these three essentials in their order, the international court should be composed of great international lawyers of the highest character and of broad vision, men who, while acting in their official capacity, will forget their nationality and make their decisions without fear or favor. The nations joining in such a court should define justiciable questions and agree that all such questions should be submitted to the court and that its action thereon should be binding upon all parties. They should also agree that all other disputes, not defined to be justiciable, should be submitted to the court, but that its action thereon should not be binding upon the parties. It should be agreed, however, that neither party should make war upon the other before submitting the dispute to the court, nor within nine months, or some given period thereafter. All nations who are parties to the creation of the court should agree, in case of violation of this provision, to apply the economic boycott against the offending nation.

The second essential is the codification of international law. This is extremely necessary, especially now, because, owing to the war, international

law as we have known it seems to have been largely destroyed. It has grown up through the years based upon sound principles, and there must be a new adherence to its fundamentals and also agreement as to new rules which world conditions now warrant. This in itself will do much to preserve peace in the future.

The third essential is a league or an association of nations—the name is immaterial. This must be no super-government. It must have no power to coerce its weaker members. It must be no alliance, either offensive or defensive. It must be one in which equality exists in all its members, and, therefore, it must be a league for consultation and conference only, with no right to make binding decisions. It should meet at stated times, perhaps once a year, and discuss all matters affecting the peace of the world; it should offer its friendly offices to assist in settling disputes between its members; but it should at all times be the impartial friend of both in its official action.

This is a rough outline of what I conceive to be a world organization that would do much to preserve the peace of the world in the future. However, we have conditions now existing that perhaps will make it necessary that we adapt ourselves, to a certain degree, to those conditions. We have now a League of Nations. I may state in passing, that I was one of those senators who, while opposed to the League as presented by President Wilson, favored our entering it with what is known as the Lodge reservations, because with those reservations, so far as the United States is concerned, we would have in large measure that kind of a participation in world affairs that I have here outlined. However, I believe it highly desirable that either a new association be formed or that the present League Covenant

be re-written, so that there shall be equality among all the members of the League, and no particular group in that League shall have power to coerce others within the group, which means that there can be no delegation of power to such a League to make either binding decisions or to coerce others. I regret, too, that in the drafting of the Treaty of Versailles there seemed to have been no thought or care or concern for what seems to me to be one of the first essentials of world peace, and that is an agreement among the nations as to the rules of international law. If we are to have peace in the future, the nations of the world must be governed by law in their international relations, just as individuals are governed by law in their relations with each other.

Then, too, in the present Covenant, while it is true that a world court or an international court is provided for in a rather incidental way, it seems to me very clear that that should be the very foundation of any world organization. First, the codification and agreement upon the law that shall govern nations; second, the creation of a tribunal to interpret and pass upon such law. As to all questions that are really justiciable in their nature that should be a court of last resort, binding upon all the nations, and, as to questions that are not so justiciable it should be a court of public opinion. While we often hear about the United States never being willing to submit any question of honor to any court, I am not afraid, as one American citizen, to submit any question that America may ever have to any judicial tribunal for its recommendation but not for its binding judgment. If we are unwilling to stand the weight of world opinion the probability is that we are wrong.

There is, however, one other essential, not in an organization itself but

as to the effectiveness of such an organization. I doubt very much whether any world organization will be very effective for the preservation of peace unless the great powers of the world shall agree upon reduction of armaments and limitation of competitive armaments; and I do not know whether it is generally realized, as I think I realize, because I have been making a considerable study of it in the past, that the wonderful progress in chemical warfare, and in the development of airplanes has practically revolutionized warfare, a much greater revolution than was witnessed in the world war, over the old methods. Chemical warfare, with the progress that has been made in its development during the past year or two, has almost unlimited possibilities. With the progress that we have made in our own chemical warfare division, I think I can see not very far ahead of us the time when the dreadnought and the super-dreadnought will be as useless for war as the flint-lock musket is today. Further than that, with the development of chemical warfare, wars may be conducted, with a comparatively small number of men, that will destroy entire cities, and the nation that has made the farthest progress in the development of chemical warfare may not need great armies, may not need millions of men who are trained, but only a comparative handful with which to wage war. With the development of the airplane a nation may be able to conduct a successful war as against a nation that, if it has not made similar progress, may have every one of its able-bodied men in arms and the greatest navy that the world has ever known

and yet it would be helpless before such an attack. But that in itself makes it all the more necessary that there be a world organization for the preservation of peace. If not, the next great war, if it shall ever come, will mean, perhaps, not the killing of five, or six, or seven millions of men, not the destruction of some hundreds of square miles of territory, but it may mean the destruction of civilization itself.

Frankly, I do not believe that any nation, the people of which have in their hearts world dominion, will be bound by the signing of a treaty, or the entering of a League of Nations. In my judgment, while we can do much to preserve peace through a world organization such as I have outlined,—or through the existing League of Nations if it shall be re-written so that instead of its being a super-government enabling the great and powerful nations to continue their power, it shall be a league for consultation and recommendation only,—after all, we must look for peace in the future to the education of the peoples of the world, making them understand, making them realize that there is no profit in war, and nothing but sorrow and disaster for those who undertake it for any selfish purpose.

In conclusion, we may look forward to the day when we shall have peace through a world organization, because through that world organization the peoples of the world will be made to realize that peace can only come when, in the words of Tennyson, "The common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe. And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapped in universal law." May America do its share to hasten this day.